area under staple foods to commercial crops like sugarcane, cotton, oilseeds, foodgrains, the output growth rate has come down to minus 3.19% the lowest rate since the days of Green Revolution; and

(d) if so, the reasons for providing more incentives for setting up of sugar mills which would further lead diversion of the area?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir, The news report indicate that with the grant of incentives, large area under food crops like wheat and rice would get converted into sugarcane which would lead to a shortage of foodgrains.

The area under sugarcane is very small as compared to the area under foodgrain crop. The annual growth in foodgrains production during the period 1990-91 to 1996-97 has been 1.70 percent. For setting up new sugar mills, an investment of the order of Rs. 40 crores is required and therefore, incentives by way of increased quota of freesale sugar is necessary to enable them to repay their term loans.

**चीनी मिलों का बंद किया जाना**

1536. **श्री इकबाल सिंह:** क्या **खाद्य** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) विगत तीन वर्षों के दौरान अब-तक देश के विभिन्न राज्यों में स्थित चीनी मिलों को कब-कब बंद किया गया और इनके बंद करने के क्या कारण हैं;

(ख) क्या यह भी सच है कि संबंधित चीनी मिलें बंद हो जाने के कारण किसान अपनी गन्ने की फसल को नहीं बेच सके और अंततः उन्हें गन्ने की फसल में आग लगानी पड़ी, जिससे राष्ट्र को काफी नुकसान हुआ;

(ग) इससे देश के कितने किसानों को कितनी क्षति हुई और इनकी क्षतिपूर्ति किस प्रकार की गई; और

(घ) ऐसी सभी चीनी मिलों के विरुद्ध सरकार ने क्या-क्या कार्यवाही की; और यदि नहीं, तो सरकार देश के किसानों के हितों की रक्षा के लिए क्या उपाय कर रही है?

**खाद्य मंत्री तथा नागरिक आपूर्ति, उपभोक्ता मामले और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री (श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव):** (क) से (घ) अपेक्षित सूचना सम्बंधित राज्यों से एकत्र की जा रही है।

**Sugarcane price due to Growers**

1537. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) the arrears of sugarcane prices due to growers on the eve of the current years' crushing season, in Maharashtra, U.P. and other States and in the country as a whole;

(b) the amount of the arrears which has been paid this year; and

(c) the steps being taken to ensure full clearance of arrears before crushing starts for the next season?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) As per the information received from the sugar mills, the cane price arrears due to the sugarcane growers for the sugar season 1995-96 (October-September) as on the eve of the current crushing season i.e. on 30.9.1996 were Rs. 707.30 crores and the amount paid to the farmers during the current 1996-97 crushing season out of the balance to be paid pertaining to the season 1995-96 as on 15.1.1997 was Rs. 396.22 crores.

(c) The responsibility for ensuring timely payments of cane price dues lies with the State Governments which have the necessary powers and field organisations to enforce such payments. The Central Government, on its part, has taken measures for improving the